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WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending August 10, 2003

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WEATHER SUMMARY: Scattered rains dropped ample amounts of rain over many areas during the week of August 3 through 9. Rainfall for the week totaled from about a third inch at Marianna to over six inches at Ft. Lauderdale and Tampa. Most localities got over one to three inches except for some eastern Panhandle localities which are drying out from earlier rains. Temperatures for the week averaged normal to two degrees below. Daytime highs were in the 80s and 90s. Nighttime lows were mostly in the 70s.

FIELD CROPS: Continued wet conditions are reducing the quality of hay and tobacco and the yield prospects for peanuts and cotton, especially in the Panhandle. Hay fields are becoming over mature with quality decreasing rapidly. The rains are slowing the harvesting of Bahia seed. Fertilizer leached from tobacco fields which lowered the leaf quality. Peanuts are rated mostly good to excellent with a small but increasing acreage rated very poor to fair due to wet soils. Ninety-eight percent of peanuts are pegged compared with ninety-eight percent pegged last year and the five-year average of ninety-five percent pegged. Recent rains prevented pesticide spraying in some areas with disease reported on a limited acreage of peanuts and tobacco. St. John' County growers are harvesting corn for grain between the showers and are plowing under some cover crops as they mature. Flooding damaged nursery crops in Baker County. Most soil moisture supplies are adequate to surplus with very short to short supplies reported for some central and southeastern coastal counties.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	Percent					
Very short	1	1	1	0	0	5
Short	1	4	19	2	5	19
Adequate	43	65	61	48	65	57
Surplus	55	30	19	50	30	19

VEGETABLES: Showers interrupted some field work as southern Peninsula producers continue fall crop plantings. Dade County

producers continue to cut okra. Some Baker County vegetables were damaged by flooding.

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: Pasture condition throughout much of the State is lower due to excessive rain. In the north and Panhandle, the grass quality has declined in most locations due to flooding. Armyworm pressure is increasing in Taylor County. In the central area, excess moisture is reducing forage quality and increasing pest pressure on calves resulting in weight loss. In the southwest, pasture in some locations is in excellent condition, while in others the rain has hurt the condition . In Manatee, there are flooded pastures and range lands are under water, with cattle moving to any high ground. Statewide, the condition of the cattle is mostly good.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
	Percent			
Very poor	5	0	0	0
Poor	5	0	0	0
Fair	15	15	10	5
Good	55	65	70	75
Excellent	20	20	20	20

CITRUS: Hot and humid weather continues through the citrus belt with moderate to heavy rainfall. Thunderstorms were severe in some areas with above average rainfall amounts reported in all areas. Polk and Lake county areas reported up to two inches for the week with some areas almost three. Growers have suspended irrigation in most areas as rainfall is sufficient. Growers are maintaining middles and lateral ditches to keep water moving away from tree roots. Summer spraying continues on a regular basis because of the frequent rainfall with some fresh fruit crops receiving more sprays than normal to keep insect populations from building up. Fruit growth is reported good and trees are in excellent condition because of all the rainfall.

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In cooperation with the Florida Cooperative Extension Service whose county directors participate in supplying field information.